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SUPPLEMENT TO

1. The following information is an extract from the All India Students Federation Bulletin regarding the visit of Guy de Boysson to Bombay on 17 to 21 February 1949. This Bulletin was issued to members of the All India Students Federation only. No attempt has been made to edit this extract.

Extract from "All India Students Federation BULLETIN
(350 Lamington Road, Bombay 7) (for Members only) Pages 11 & 12
(Cyclostyled)

The Visit of Guy de Boysson

Guy de Boysson, President of the W.F.D.Y. and the Communist member of the French Union Assembly, visited Bombay from 17th to 21st February.

Today when the Government is ruthlessly trying to crush the democratic movement of every section of our people, today when the fighting spirit of the working youth of India is symbolized in the coming strike of the railway workers in face of fascist repression on them and their unions, Com. Guy's visit has a big significance.

He was sent to India by the W.F.D.Y. with the object of establishing closer and stronger links with the working youth, to see by himself the conditions under which the youth lived and worked and how far it had succeeded in different parts of India to build its own organization to fight and win his demands.

The A.I.S.F. Secretariat invited him first to Bombay, for it was here that the demands of the working youth had found voice for the first time two months ago. The conference of the Dalit Youth which was attended by over 800 delegates pledged to build a strong youth movement in Bombay to win the demands of the youth. It is in Bombay again that the youth of different industries have expressed their urge to organize by joining scores of 'akhadas' and such organizations and by taking a leading part in building sectional organization or starting

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areawise youth organizations.

Therefore, when the Bombay Students' Union invited various organizations to participate in the reception committee, dozens of them came forward with great enthusiasm, bringing with them the fighting militant youth of Bombay.

The veteran Girni Kamgar Union, the Firestone Workers' Union which is leading a month old strike, the Railway and Dock Workers' union, the Keraleyya Seva Samaj, the Bengali Pragatiship Juv Samiti, the Communist Party of Bombay, the Friends of the Soviet Union, were some of the organizations that participated actively in the programme organized for the guest.

Thousands of leaflets in five languages, scores of posters and placards, etc. were brought out by the Reception Committee and distributed and pasted all over the city. A number of group meetings were organized to explain the work of the W.F.D.Y.

It was because of this intensive work and propaganda that it was possible to make a very big success of Com. Guy's visit. Within five days of his stay, he addressed over 10,000 people in six meetings. He saw dozens of chawls and slums of the textile and railway workers and sweepers. He visited mills and saw conditions under which the youth worked. He talked to scores of workers during his visit and discussed the main problems of the youth movement with the leading workers in two special closed door meetings.

Hundreds of young workers welcomed him wherever he went. At Walpakhadi sweepers' chawl, first they showed him the spot where Bhani Jethi, a 70 year old woman, was shot dead by Morarji's bullet during last Sweepers' strike. At Matunga Labour Camp, in the filth of their dwellings, the inhabitants had erected a beautiful dias and came to welcome him with bands. Over 400 attended the meeting. The women brought a piece of bread and said, "See what they are giving us to eat."

At the Sewree area he addressed the Firestone workers on strike who had been waiting for him for over two hours in the hot sun. He also saw the room of Com. Rambhau Patil, the beloved leader of the textile workers, who is rotting behind prison bars for the crime of making a speech in support of the strike on August 11th in the Corporation. Guy saw his children, half-starved and neglected, their mother forced to stay out for long hours to earn her meagre living. He saw the filth in which our youth lives, our children play. He saw that they hardly had the opportunity to study, to play, to live and work decently. Their condition had not changed after the transfer of power; in fact, it had worsened after the visit of the World Youth Commission that visited India three years back.

But the working youth of Bombay had matured in these three years. Today not only he saw that he had a right to a decent life, he clearly understood that if he has to win it, he must organize in a strong militant youth organization which will lead his battles and take him to victory. It was this understanding that was expressed in every meeting. At the Nappu Gardens, where the bulk of the audience was youth from the offices, at Madanpura where over 1,000 young Muslim workers attended the meeting, or at Sewree and Lalbaug, everywhere the young speakers of various organizations declared their full support to the WFDY and pledged to build a strong youth movement in Bombay, uniting all sections of youth to win their demands like, right to apprenticeship, better and equal wages, better housing, better conditions for work, etc. In every meeting the slogans of "WFDY Zindabad"

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and "Youth of the world unite," etc. rent the air.

When the youth of Bombay was welcoming Guy de Boysson as their true friend, as the symbol of their fighting unity with the democratic youth in other countries, Morarji's Police did its level best to harass him. They called him to the police station and demanded that he should not address public meetings. So panicky were they at the enthusiasm aroused by his visit that, over 50 CID men and over a dozen police constables swooped over the meeting at Sewree and arrested P.G. Sawant, the President of the Meeting and the Reception Committee and also the Girni Kamgar Union. They beat up the workers who went to rescue their leader.

Reply to this repression came next day at the Lalbaug Maidan meeting, in the heart of the working class area. 7,000 workers came to attend the meeting. Over 55 organizations, buildings including the chawl where Bombay's first worker martyr, Parshuram Jadhav, lived, individuals, etc. garlanded the guest. The meeting condemned the repression let loose by the Government and demanded the release of their leaders and colleagues. Comrade Guy speaking said, "I have seen such arrests only twice before in my life. First time in my own land, France, when the Germans occupied the country. We called that regime Nazism. Second time it was in Greece two years back. Monarcho-Fascist Government was arresting and shooting down the democratic people calling them all Communists. You know where the Government stands today. I want to assure you that you are not alone in your fight. When I go back the world youth will know what is happening in your country."

Guy's visit to Bombay for the first time brought together various young workers in different Trade Unions, cultural, political and economical organizations. They came together as Youth and discussed their specific demands. Discussions of the fundamental questions like, "Is it necessary to have separate youth organization when already the T.U.s, the Kisan Sabhas and the Student organizations exist?" "Would not a separate youth organization hamper the work of these organizations?" took place between the leading workers and Com. Guy. This has clarified to a very great extent the understanding and perspective with regard to the youth movement. His visit lays down the possibility to build a broad movement in Bombay, to revive various youth organizations and starting regular work. It also popularized the WFDY amongst the broad masses and it has opened up big possibilities of working youth here in the World Youth Congress and the Festival to be held in Budapest.

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- * ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ Comment. Guy de Boysson, president of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), is the subject ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ The latest 25X1A information on de Boysson, dated 22 March 1949, reveals that he passed through Calcutta the end of February and spent two days at Chandernagore.

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